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Review Essay:

What the Differences between Taiwan and Hong Kong Studies Reveal about the Differences between Taiwan and Hong Kong Society

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Taiwan since Martial Law: Society, Culture, Politics, Economy, edited by David Blundell, Taipei: Shung Ye Museum, National Taiwan University Press and University of California Berkeley, 2012, 730pp, \$50.00, ISBN: 978-9868805507.

Lost in Transition: Hong Kong Culture in the Age of China, by Chu Yiu-wai, Albany: State University of New York Press, 2013, 228pp, \$80.00, ISBN: 978-438446455

Becoming Taiwan: From Colonialism to Democracy, edited by Ann Heylen and Scott Sommers, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2010, £48.00, 223pp, ISBN: 978-3447063746

邊城對話：香港、中國、邊緣、邊界 [City on the Edge: Hong Kong, China, Boundaries and Borderland], edited by Pang Lai-kwan (彭麗君編) Hong Kong: 香港中文大學出版社 [The Chinese University of Hong Kong Press], 302pp, TW\$142.00 ISBN: 978-9629965440

Taiwanese Identity in the Twenty-first Century: Domestic, Regional and Global Perspectives, edited by Gunter Schubert and Jens Damm, Abingdon: Routledge, 2011, £90.00, 304pp, ISBN: 978-0415620239

Rethinking Hong Kong: New Paradigms, New Perspectives, edited by Elizabeth Sinn, Wong Siu-lun and Chan Wing-hoi, Hong Kong: Center for Asian Studies, The University of Hong Kong, 2009, 361pp, ISBN: 978-9628269495

In recent years, there has been an explosion of scholarly reflection and writing about Taiwan and Hong Kong, with works both about the present and with an eye to the future. Books comparing Taiwan and Hong Kong abound in the literature, although most tend to be narrowly defined. It is certainly possible to write a comparative history, to compare political relations and destinies, or to analyze

differences (typically within a set analytical framework) between specific institutions, such as education, family, etc., but is more difficult to identify how and why Taiwan and Hong Kong are different and what makes them unique, even given what we already know about their historical experiences and in terms of their social, cultural and political attributes. Area studies experts tend to view the world primarily within their own confines and within a language that reflects niche concerns and interests: I argue that what makes local area studies accounts noteworthy is not necessarily their explicit content, but what they tend at the same time to omit as irrelevant. These omissions do not simply reflect objective differences, but also point to salient differences in mindsets that are produced by different experiences. I have chosen to review three books each for Taiwan and for Hong Kong. Despite the different disciplinary coverages for each area, they share common concerns or outlooks that are absent or differently manifested in other areas. Only after identifying these is comparison relevant.

The book edited by **Schubert and Damm** is a collection of 13 essays by a varied group of scholars from Germany, Taiwan, France and UK. Several of them, including the co-editors, are associated with the University of Tübingen; thus the work presented may be considered the result of collective research. All of the essays clearly show that the authors are experts in Taiwan Studies, or social scientists involved actively with Taiwan. As suggested by its forward-looking title, the field of inquiry traverses the concerns of recent history, in particular contemporary politics. Given the standard association of Taiwan with postwar Republican-era KMT policy, the obvious motivation behind this book seems to be the need to update our profile of Taiwan to include sociopolitical transformations that have taken place in the last few decades. If invoked at all, history in this regard is one that predicates the future.

The essays are framed within domestic, regional and global contexts, which reflect their primary relevance presumably for contemporary area studies specialists and political relations of all kinds. Taiwan's internal transformations are portrayed as *sui generis*, which impact in turn its relationships with neighbors and beyond. However, the directionality of global/local relations is misguided. In this regard, identity in the book serves as a convenient keyword to characterize changes from an early postwar era marked by the KMT's policy of monocultural nationalism. Multiculturalism and economic liberalism have, in short, replaced the identity politics of a now-bygone era. But just as the conservative stance of Taiwan's 'Republic of China' was the product of Cold War dualism, it was Taiwan's expulsion from the UN that eventually forced it to adopt 'a third way'. It is possible to view identity formation largely as internal discourse, but its significance is misplaced. In content, Heylen's reinventions of historical memory and Fleischauer's historiography of the 2-28 massacre of Taiwanese reflect in essence the ongoing consequences of the KMT's negotiation with its Taiwanese majority. Wu's essay on the evolution of the KMT's One China policy is also articulated as a kind of domestic dialogue that in the process of straddling the two poles of reunification and independence has adopted ambivalences and ambiguities reflecting the nuances of constantly mutating relationships across the Straits. Corcuff phrases changing identities in terms of relationships between ethnic Mainlanders and Taiwanese, or in the ongoing tension between cultural and political meanings of such ethnicity. Fell delves into the ramifications of ethnic identity for party politics,

while Schubert and Braig expound on the ramifications of the DPP's policies of ethnic indigenization for the future of cross-Strait relations. The other essays on regional and global perspectives are articulated largely in terms of a language of international relations or with reference to cross-cultural comparison. Chu's essay ruminates on the consequences of Taiwan's identity politics on relations between China and the US, while Keng assesses political entanglements caused by increased economic and social integration across the Straits. King examines the effects of cross-Straits marriages upon perceptions of national identity in both Taiwan and the PRC. Lee looks at the possibilities of divided sovereignty from a legal point of view. Damm describes the changing status of overseas Chinese, overseas Taiwanese and *huaren* from a long historical perspective. Shih speculates on the role of Taiwan in an East Asian imaginary. Finally, Kaeding compares identity formation in Taiwan and Hong Kong.

While the concrete diversity of these essays covers the field of seminal issues, they all display a stereotypical political-science view of things, especially in the definition of identity. The spin on identity, broadly conceived, contrasts with interests of more empirically minded social scientists fixated on hard power and statistical trends, but most, or all, of these works seem to underscore the assumption that identity is a tangible entity that people have by nature or necessity. Its relevance to politics is never really problematized. The constant making and unmaking of identity in the process of crisis is analytically distinct from its strategic uses.

The edited collection by **Heylen and Sommers** comprises 12 essays by diverse scholars representing various institutions and walks of life. The essays are all written by experts who either do research on or who live in Taiwan, and together they represent diverse disciplinary backgrounds. The theme of '*becoming*' in the book's title focuses on transition, and the wide historical scope that is applied to colonialism and democracy covers a wide historical range from the Japanese colonial era to contemporary culture and society. Yet despite this, there is little attempt to probe colonialism or democracy in any serious way; they are simply keywords for investigating distinctive aspects of change. The book is divided into three sections: (1) How Chinese is Taiwan?; (2) Organizing a Taiwanese Society; and (3) Speaking about Taiwan. Themes of ethnic identity, language and education, literary representation, historical memory or cultural policy traverse almost every essay. However, why such culturalist themes provide a seminal or distinctive locus for understanding the transition of Taiwan from colonialism to democracy – as opposed, for example, to mainstream political or economic approaches – is not really directly addressed. Nonetheless, most if not all of the essays in the book are concrete case studies that provide a wealth of data.

The authors in Part I (P. Kerim Friedman, Alexander Tsung-ming Chen, Darryl Sterk, and Pei-yin Lin) confront ethnic relations between aboriginal peoples, Taiwanese and Han Chinese over different periods of rule. Friedman deals with the history of aboriginal education from the end of the Qing through the Japanese colonial period into the KMT postwar era, within which language policy played a salient role in acculturation. Chen's paper on the linguistic adaptation of the Jesuits in KMT postwar Taiwan also focused on the importance of language in successfully carrying out their missions. Many Jesuit priests came from Mainland China, and thus spoke Mandarin fluently. Others continued to learn local

Taiwanese and Hakka dialect. Sterk's essay examines Chinese and aboriginal intermarriage relations as represented in novels during KMT postwar rule, in which the desirability of assimilation and settler ideals was emphasized. This began to change with the advent of aboriginal cultural consciousness and identity. Novels from this point to some extent reflect prevailing views of interethnic relations: Lin's essay compares the novels of Lin Yaode and Li Qiao in regard to the February 28 Incident or KMT massacre of Taiwanese intellectuals, taking an aboriginal perspective, while Li views the same events from a Taiwanese perspective. Both attempt to construct alternative historical memories. The essays in Part II (by Caroline Hui-yu Ts'ai, Fang-mei Lin, Min-chin Chiang and Mike Shi-chi Lan) speak to the issue of organizing a Taiwanese society, but in actuality they share little in common. Tsai's essay focuses on social engineering of the rural *baojia* system during the late Japanese colonial era. Lin's paper discusses the legal debates and social movements surrounding the rights of sex workers in 1990s Taipei. Chiang's paper deals with the role of museums in the construction of heritage and social memory in 1990s Taiwan. Lan's paper describes the socially alienating experiences of KMT soldiers in Taiwan during the Cold War era and its aftermath. In Part III, loosely characterized as 'speaking about Taiwan', the essays (by Ann Heylen, Sandrine Marchand, Tana Dluhosova and Scott Sommers) seem to address issues of language again. Heylen discusses the tensions of becoming Japanese and Taiwanese in the Japanese colonial era, with education playing a seminal role. Marchand discusses the effects of language suppression on Taiwanese intellectuals in different phases of colonial and postwar era Taiwan. Dluhosova's paper discussing early postwar debates in the Taiwanese literature ultimately addresses issues pertaining to cultural integration. Lastly, Sommers' essay examines Mandarin, Taiwanese and English in relation to politics and everyday uses.

In sum, this book is a mixed bag of essays on Taiwan's societal evolution over a wide historical spectrum, but with a heavy emphasis on language, ethnicity, education and culture.

Blundell's edited volume comprises 19 essays written by experts working in and outside Taiwan. Six of the authors have been affiliated with the International Postgraduate Program in Taiwan or Asia-Pacific Studies at National Chengchi University, where Blundell, the editor, teaches. Reflecting its breadth of coverage, the book is divided into two parts, 'Society and Culture' and 'Politics and Economy'. Most of the essays are concrete case studies of various aspects of Taiwan culture or economy, but written in a way that is readable to people seeking general information about Taiwan. Like many of the recently edited books on contemporary Taiwan, the focus is on changes since the Cold War, reflected in, among other things, the liberalization of the economy, cosmopolitan openness, political democratization, and multicultural indigenization. At the same time, it avoids presenting rigorous theoretical perspectives on any of the above. As a long-time resident of Taiwan, Blundell's introduction to Taiwan since martial law depicts a generally upbeat picture of successful achievements 'in our time', as he puts it, without directly addressing the repressive, nationalistic past that preceded it.

The essays give a positive assessment of Taiwan's current situation. Tedards' 'Trajectories of Democratization' refers to democratization as the 'other miracle', lesser known than the economic miracle. This transition is viewed in contrast to

Taiwan repressive past, the subsequent revision of the Constitution, the trajectories of the two major political parties, the future prospects of civil society, and threats to Taiwan's democracy, especially from the outside. Blundell's 'Taiwan Coming of Age' traces his involvement in grassroots ecology associations and heritage protection movements, showing how these have contributed to Taiwan's unique sense of place. Heylen's 'Grassroots Taiwan History' focuses in part on studies of *pingpu* Plains Aborigines (indigenous cultures that became Sinicized in past centuries), which have contributed to the emergence of a Taiwan-centric perspective in other disciplines. Wood's essay on Beitou's Hot Springs Museum, located at a famous hot springs vacation venue, situates the museum in the general context of heritage conservation. Ku Kun-hui's essay on minority rights and the politics of indigenous cultures in the context of an emerging Taiwan nationalism outlines the situation of Taiwan's Austronesian peoples within the changing postwar minority policies of the ROC government and the later advent of Taiwanese indigenization. Wu's essay covers a similar ethnic renaissance movement among the Hakka, a Han minority whose history of settlement in Taiwan parallels that of Hokkien speakers. Mitsuda's essay depicts the various developments leading up to the government's recognition in 2009 of the Thao, an aboriginal group living at Sun Moon Lake, as the fourteenth official indigenous culture in Taiwan. Hu's essay on Yami ecological memory on Orchid Island focuses on land rights and the sacredness of place identity in the face of military land use, housing developments, reforestation, tourism and the location of a nuclear waste site there. Leifelt-Tsai's essay recounts the varied experiences of Taiwan exchange students in Germany since the 1980s. Hsiao's essay is a general history of the middle class in postwar Taiwan from the 1980s. Alsford's essay discusses the history of the tea industry in Taiwan from the nineteenth century to the present. Muyard's sociological account of the formation of Taiwan's new national identity since the end of the 1980s is an attempt to reconcile changes in sub-ethnic consciousness with the changing nature of national identity. Sullivan's essay deals with election campaigning, especially in the era of democratic politics. This is followed by an essay by Gary and Ming-yeh Rawnsley on the evolution of Taiwan's media in the aftermath of democratization. Tan's essay describes Taiwan's adoption of civil rights law from the US system and its role in a fledgling democracy. Reid discusses land rights issues in the Atayal village community of Smangus. Bowman then compares human rights policy under Chen Shui-bian and Ma Ying-jeou. Vio discusses economic integration across the Straits and its effects on cultural identity and issues of national sovereignty. Chu's essay deals with the growth of Taiwan's semiconductor industry in the context of globalization, migration across the Straits and with regard to technology transfer, investment patterns and talent flows. Finally, Chow offers a review of Taiwan's economic performance, focusing on the role and policies of the developmental state in particular in relation to democratization.

In contrast to other edited volumes on contemporary Taiwan, a large number (seven) of the essays deal with anthropological issues or indigenous peoples, which perhaps reflects the editor's background in anthropology. Two essays dealing with heritage or the culture industry can also be considered to have anthropological relevance. The three essays dealing directly with political changes, media or human rights, as well as the two sociological essays dealing with the rise

of a middle class and the multiplicity of new ethnic, national identities, establish a link with the democratization process. Similarly, the three essays dealing with economic growth and science/technology developments promote a generally progressive outlook. In sum, what all of the essays in this volume project in the long run is a positive, optimistic spin.

The three books cover different sides of Taiwan. The authors in Schubert and Damm's book are ultimately interested in the new Taiwanese identity that emerged after democratic reforms and the development of a free market economy. The contributors to Heylen and Sommers' book cover a wider historical transition from colonialism to democratization, but the focus is largely on how cultural education, language strategies, and historical memory have affected assimilation and ethnic consciousness. The essays in Blundell's book are loosely structured in a different way: they are parts of an encyclopedic account of various aspects of social, cultural, political and economic life in Taiwan today. Taken together, all three books paint a rather compatible picture about Taiwan in which democratization seems to be the prime factor that brought about the changes seen today. Colonialism is present, but largely as a discontinuous past that was dualized during the early KMT regime but influenced the rise of Taiwanese identity, at least indirectly. Ethnicity is a prominent theme not just because of Taiwanese–Mainlander tensions but also given the existence of Hakka and indigenous minorities. Nationalism has been relegated to the past, largely as a result of democratization, and all of these experiences in the long run have contributed to the rise of a new Taiwan, as though unchained from the past and defined by a renaissance of distinctive features and outlooks. This seems to be the new look of Taiwanese Studies as well: progressive, multicultural, open-ended and cosmopolitan.

The volume edited by **Sinn *et al.*** consists of eleven papers first given at the 'Paradigms and Perspectives in Hong Kong Studies' conference at the University of Hong Kong, under the auspices of the Hong Kong Culture and Society Programme and subsequently published by the Center for Asian Studies. The need or desire to rethink Hong Kong was clearly precipitated in large part by the circumstances engendered by the change of regime in 1997; equally significantly, most of these authors are established scholars with decades of research and writing on Hong Kong, in addition to representing diverse fields and perspectives. Thus, it appears that the impetus stems less from the need to assess the actually changing nature of Hong Kong than the desire to rethink paradigms of or perspectives on Hong Kong, given its change of circumstances.

While turning on the phrase 'one country, two systems', Wang Gungwu's essay, 'One Country, Two Cultures: An Alternative View of Hong Kong', represents in fact a level-headed attempt to transcend the rhetoric of state policies and ideological labels. Culture, for him, is a kind of broad mindset and practical strategy rather than something bound by ethnic or language barriers. Nonetheless, the cultural divisions remain real obstacles toward reconciliation. J.Y. Wong attempts to apply a periphery–centre paradigm to political relations between Hong Kong and Beijing, but the various observations he makes on numerous events are rambling at best. Bernard Luk's essay on schooling and social change in Hong Kong from 1950–1980 does not seem to be new at all, as it reiterates the same narratives of modern progress in the history of the school system. As for prospects after 1997,

he just says that this is an open question. David Faure's 'Rethinking Colonialism in Hong Kong' is a condensation of part of a longer book, *Colonialism and the Hong Kong Mentality* (2003). While he attempts to sift through changes in the nature of political rule over a long period, as well as the role of education in the changing relationship between colonizers and colonized, he tries ultimately to bridge institutional with cultural changes as part of a larger framework for future analysis. Takeshi Hamashita's essay, 'Geopolitics of Hong Kong Economy', asserts that little research has been done on the economic history of Hong Kong, taking a line of vision extending from the early nineteenth century to the present. While it is true that Hong Kong played an important role as trade intermediary between the West and Southeast Asia, China and Japan, and as a node for Chinese regional and overseas migration (in addition to their remittances), the historical scope of his attention is somewhat broad. It is also unclear what new paradigms he suggests here, aside from the obvious mass of statistical data that could be compiled for the above. Wong Siu-lun's essay on the rise of Hong Kong as a 'network society' apparently has less to do with the internet version than with business networks, writ large socially and politically. He describes this as decentering, because of Hong Kong's peripheral location yet multicultural axis. The essay by Gary Hamilton and Kao Cheng-shu on Chinese business networks is more of the same, except that it focuses on the concrete role of connections made at Lunar New Year banquets. Despite its title, I am not sure what exactly about this field is being reconsidered. In another essay, Thomas Wong sums up the objectives, practices and lessons of the Hong Kong social indicators survey project that he had been involved in over the previous 25 years. This is followed by Carolyn Cartier's essay on the future prospects of relational urban studies, in relation especially to post-colonialism and globalization. Elizabeth Sinn argues for a better understanding of Hong Kong's role in history as an 'in-between place' for large scale migration, which has had ramifications for transnational investment, disaster and war relief as well for as the birth of institutions, such as the Tung Wah Hospital. At the same time, Salaff and Greve's work on the migration triangle between PRC, Hong Kong and Canada focuses on current networks and social processes. Yet what is new about Hong Kong or its paradigms is still unclear.

Chu Yiu-wai's book comprises independent essays that formulate a broad reflection on the state of Hong Kong after 1997, with specific reference to the meaning of postcoloniality in the abstract and the relevance of global capitalism in the concrete. There have been many works dealing with Hong Kong after 1997, especially in relation to things political. More interestingly, the political emerges, but in the context of cultural studies. What political scientists call 'soft power' is anything but soft, just cultural. It is by dissecting the cultural that one can understand at a deeper level the nature of that political transition. Chu rightly addresses the myth of 'one country, two systems' in order to suggest in part that the political crisis can be read primarily in cultural terms. As the following essays argue, Hong Kong is lost in the transition between national and global, in the reconfigurations of Chineseness in the age of global modernity, in the attempted advent of a neo-liberal cultural governmentality and in the tensions between cultural heritages and creative industries. Chu's background in comparative literature leads him to focus quite naturally on cinema, music and the arts, which

become the basis for a final reflection on the state of comparative literature as critical theory.

In his introductory essay on the state of Hong Kong's transitional dilemma, Chu argues that Hong Kong culture has not disappeared in a strict sense but that its cultural confrontation with China involves in part a recognition of the multiplicity of Chineseness-es as well as a renewed synthesis between culture and a changing urbanity, globality and transnationalism. In 'The Rise of China and its Soft Power', he attempts to decipher the China factor in terms of China's emerging cultural hegemony. Part of this is prompted, of course, by the rise of China as a superpower, but Chu is mindful of Zhang Xudong's description of China's particularity as a superpower 'in which state propaganda, advertising industry, market-driven popular media as well as semi-autonomous intellectuals all act as competing agents'. The result is 'a dazzling collage of images and a cognitive vacuum to be detected by a new critical practice' (cited by Chu on p. 20). Echoing Arif Dirlik, it is a superpower in which the very language of alternatives and multiplicity is enabled historically by the presupposition of a common modernity shaped by a globalizing capitalism. In this space of a new global modernity, Orientalism, nationalism and postcolonialism become reconfigured. Chu cites the example of Zhang Yimou's films, then addresses the role of Hong Kong in the age of China. In 'Central District Values', he discusses the strong governance policies of Hong Kong's Chief Executive Donald Tsang, which he calls 'Donaldization', in reference and comparison to the McDonaldization-of-society thesis. The modernity being promoted here is one of an administrative rationality that does not respond in actuality to the people. The incomplete packaging of society experienced under Tsang's regime leads to a discussion of the 'Brand Hong Kong' program and its adverse effects on Hong Kong's cultural and creative industries. Needless to say, the history of Hong Kong's culture industry well precedes 1997, but the role of government in promoting it integrated the bundled development of creative industries to the local heritage conservation movement. Brand Hong Kong in essence packaged the local with a global marketing strategy in ways that perverted the advent of true cosmopolitanism. In 'One Country, Two Cultures', Chu analyzes the development of Hong Kong and Chinese cinema in the reconstituted space of post-1997 Hong Kong. Perhaps unlike other cultural studies commentators, he focuses less on the content of cinema per se and assesses it in the context of a changing market that includes a 'greater' PRC, especially given the rise of Hong Kong–Mainland co-productions. There are clear ramifications here also for cultural identity as variations on a glocal relationship. In 'Who Sings for Hong Kong?', Chu assesses the changing nature and role of Cantopop in the Age of China and in the general transition from a prior Greater China to a Greater PRC. There are many similarities here with that of cinema. He concludes with some speculative thoughts on the future of Hong Kong 'exceptionalism'.

The book of twelve essays edited by **Pang Lai-kwan**, *City on the Edge*, has the title *Border City Dialogues* in Chinese. Its English title gives a stronger sense of crisis. Nonetheless, the element of dialogue, between scholars and between two sides of the border, is equally relevant. As Pang reiterates in her introduction, 'marginalization' is the source of Hong Kong people's greatest sense of panic, which has prompted scholars and intellectuals, mostly based in Hong Kong, to reflect critically on Hong Kong-China's anxious state of relations.

The book is divided into three parts: (1) History: Borders Outside Hong Kong; (2) Life: China's Border Peoples; and (3) Border City: Alternative Discourses of Hong Kong–China Relations. In Part I, all four papers deal with China's relations with its internal minorities or its alterity. In 'The Hermeneutics of Recognition of China's Minority Peoples: Views from the "Margin"', Lo Kwai Cheung explores perceptions of China from the frontier throughout history, mutual incompatibilities of nation (*minzu*) and state (*guojia*) leading up to modern times and official nationalities policy in the PRC era. In 'The Problems of Tibet and Taiwan from a Historical Perspective', Hung Ho-fung and Kuo Huei-ying contrast the political positions of Tibet and Taiwan in light of their respective political developmental paths. As variations on the principle of 'one country, two systems', their relevance is not lost on Hong Kong's situation in theory and practice. In Yu Siu-wah's 'The Margins of Chinese Music: Ethnic Minority Musi', she documents the influences of ethnic minority music on Chinese traditions in the Qing dynasty. Like prior papers, she ends with an analogy to highlight the distinctive vitality of Hong Kong music in the larger Chinese context. In 'Illiteracy, Social Masses and the World: The Latinization Movement in 1930s China', Huang Zhimin recounts a failed attempt to Romanize Chinese script characters. However, despite its conclusions, the relevance to Hong Kong is remote. Part II, 'Life', moves away from ethnic minorities *per se* to marginal groups in a broader sense. In 'Monopolistic Capitalism and Chinese Labor', Pun Ngai and Xu Yi examine the factory work regime and mode of production at Foxconn. Here, the core–periphery distinctions in global capitalism that link China to the world and create social stratification along regional and class lines manifest in turn different genres of marginalization. In 'Responses to Ecological Crisis: From the "Peace Women" of Rural China', Chan Shun Hing plays on the relativism of women to men and rural to urban to reflect on that of Hong Kong to China. In 'Marginal Status in Transition: The Reciprocity of Politics and Religion in China', Kung Yap Yan delves into the politicized status of religion and the parallel plight of religious freedom in PRC. What he calls 'marginal' is less a geographical analogy to Hong Kong than its minor role in the larger politics of society. In 'Counterfeit China vs. Creative China', Pang Lai-kwan examines two facets of the PRC's culture industry that co-exist, perhaps uneasily, at two levels of the economy. Hong Kong may be indeed in the creative stage now, but in its developing stage it also played a large role in the counterfeit goods industry. In Part III, 'Border City', Chow Yiu Fai's 'Possibilities of Flow, Movement and Reversal: The Marginalization of Hong Kong's Pop Music?' reflects on the presumed demise of Hong Kong's pop music. Without doubt, while some of this can be attributed to the advent of China from a transnational space once situated outside PRC; he offers an optimistic view on the ever-changing nature of such Chinese music. Ma Kit-wai's essay, 'Hong Kong's Reappearance (Transborder Cultural Politics)', is partly an allusion to Ackbar Abbas' *Hong Kong: Culture and the Politics of Disappearance*, but he argues for a politics of reappearance based on negotiation with a newly emerging present. Li Cho-kiu's 'The Margins of "Hong Kong Culture": A Preliminary Investigation of the Cultural Logic of the Patriotic Left' looks at the legacy of Hong Kong's left wing in relation to the evolution of socialist China, concluding with prospects for the possibilities of Hong Kong cultural studies.

The above three books offer slightly different perspectives on Hong Kong, and in each case the post-1997 transition provides a common platform for reflexive concern. Despite the search for new paradigms and new perspectives for rethinking Hong Kong, the essays in the book edited by Sinn *et al.* seem to recycle the same old approaches already prevalent in the established scholarly literature. The diversity of disciplinary viewpoints is admirable, but there is little explicit attention to changes in the post-1997 era or any serious attempt to rethink how changes in regime have prompted the desire or necessity for new paradigms. The other two books get their impetus generally from critical cultural studies, which at the same time privileges questions – all other things remaining equal – of perception and interpretation. Perhaps unlike the standard cultural studies line, Chu Yiu-wai's object of critical scrutiny is the advent of global capitalism in PRC and its influence upon relations with Hong Kong. The rise of neo-liberal governmentality in Hong Kong's SAR is not in this regard an irrelevant development. In many regards, the developmentalist focus in both Hong Kong and the PRC represents at the same time an overt diversion from democracy-related issues. In culture, as in politics, Chu seems to argue that the future of Hong Kong lies first in its recognition of intertwined relationship as a point of departure for developing new tactics of engagement and cultural strategies. In the book edited by Pang, the authors share with Chu (and to a less obvious extent with those in Sinn *et al.*) the fiction of 'one country, two systems'. However, there is an explicit attempt to stretch the concept of marginality as a basis for cultural alterity and critical difference. Marginality resonates with Marxist critique in general and has enjoyed a resurgence of meaning under the banner of 'subaltern studies'. However, one might ask to what extent can one meaningfully extend the relevance of marginality from one rooted in a politically economic condition and social stratification, to cultural geography and other states of imagination. Ethnic minorities have been an established field in sinological history and contemporary ethnology; what, therefore is the critical difference put forth by essays in Part I? On the other hand, one might reverse sides and ask that while many of the papers, especially on the 1930's Latinization movement, ethnic minority music during the Qing and the politicization of religion in PRC, are respectable essays in their own right, how do they benefit exactly from the book's focus on marginality and in relation to Hong Kong? While it is clear that Hong Kong suffers from crises of marginality, one might also ask why Macau seems much less afflicted by such crises and perceptions.

It is easy to observe Taiwan and Hong Kong from the narrow prism of area studies. In each case, research on local culture, society and politics is conducted by experts in respective fields and with reference to an ongoing literature. In fact, the overall contribution to Taiwan and Hong Kong Studies has not been insignificant, with ramifications for a better appreciation of developments in both places. However, the differences that distinguish Taiwan and Hong Kong are less apparent in what experts say about their own niches than in what is omitted, as though by common sense, from these accounts. On the whole, Taiwan Studies is driven by an inherent optimism, prompted by the triumph of democratization and liber(aliz)ation of various sorts. By contrast, Hong Kong's return to or integration with China has become the pessimistic basis for predicting an inevitable clash. Whether one calls the root of it a crisis invoked by nationalism, post-colonialism,

global capitalism, or assimilation within a whole, is and can be a matter of further scrutiny. What is less obvious is the extent to which the same kinds of political, economic, and cultural processes have affected both Taiwan and Hong Kong. The diverse ways in which such processes unfolded, however, constitute in actuality the basis of ongoing developments and significant divergences in experience that have in turn molded different geopolitical contexts, institutional frameworks, and regimes of everyday life. It is safe to say that the specter of colonialism is different in Taiwan and in Hong Kong. The advent of a free market port and economy in Hong Kong in the 1970s is not all that different from that which followed Taiwan's radical break with its insular societal structure and centralized economy. Taiwan's cultural nationalism was an attempt to eradicate a colonial legacy, but it also helped precipitate the rise of Taiwanese consciousness much later. Hong Kong's return to the motherland is to some extent a process of cultural nationalist incorporation too, but with subtle nuances. The significant differences involve a question: why is ethnicity such an integral part of Taiwan culture, while it is completely absent in the Hong Kong mindset? In Taiwan, Japanese colonial nostalgia is an invention provoked largely by the oppressive nature of early KMT rule. In Hong Kong, British colonialism is a legacy whose real effects on the present are a matter of interpretation. Democratization in Taiwan is also seen as linked to the rise of multiculturalism or Taiwanese indigenization, whereas in Hong Kong it is viewed as irrelevant to culture overall. Needless to say, Taiwan is marginal *vis-à-vis* China in many respects, but it certainly feels less threatened by the fiction of 'one country, two systems' and the reality of economic integration. What accounts for these differences? Those experiences that Taiwan scholars take for granted as unique to Taiwan – namely democracy and ethnic multivocality – are products of a different geopolitical or historical constitution. The same can be said for the cultural politics of incorporation that has engendered crises of hegemonic domination and social alienation in Hong Kong today.

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